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To Whom It May Concern:

I am a resident at 166 Chestnut Street in West Newton. I live there with my husband, David Lane, and our three children. I have lived at this address since 1993. The property belongs to my former husband, Jordan Appel, and I continue to live there pursuant to our divorce decree until June, 2015.

I write in support of our abutting neighbors, Elliot Schildkrout and Terry Rosenberg, and their request to build a garage on their property at 164 Chestnut Street, West Newton. I have no objection on aesthetic grounds and strongly endorse the building of the garage for safety reasons.

My husband and I share a common driveway with Elliot and Terry and our other neighbors at 170 Chestnut Street. Because of the odd configuration of the property, if there are more than two cars in Terry and Elliot's driveway, they are forced to back out down a long driveway onto Chestnut at the intersection of Chestnut, Highland, and Valentine. The common portion of the driveway is very long and narrow; where it forks in the middle (leading to our property) the road is not level and is divided by a rock wall that juts to the left at that point. In order to back out of the driveway, vehicles must be maneuvered in such a way as to avoid the wall on the right and the trees to the left, which presents a serious navigational challenge even in ideal driving conditions. At night or when the road is snow covered, this becomes increasingly hazardous.

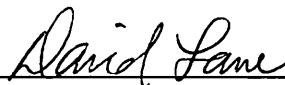
These navigational challenges also pose a potential safety threat for our children and their friends as they must use the same driveway to access our house. A driver may not be able to see a pedestrian in the driveway due to the intense focus required in executing the maneuvers necessary to either turn a vehicle around or reverse towards the street. At night the visibility is extremely poor; in winter, snow and ice create an **additional challenge** (particularly since the driveway angles downward towards the street); in the summer, the foliage narrows the driveway further. Once a driver has reversed a vehicle to the bottom of the driveway, additional foliage and the stone wall at 170 Chestnut Street can obstruct sightings of pedestrians approaching on the sidewalk. After the sidewalk is crossed by the reversing vehicle, a four-way stop must be negotiated – with the reversing driver forced to cross two lanes in reverse at an extraordinarily busy intersection (in fact, vehicles frequently run the stop sign on Valentine Street as they approach Chestnut Street, posing an enormous hazard to a reversing vehicle).

A two-car garage on the Schildkrout/Rosenberg property would make it possible for drivers entering and leaving 164 Chestnut to easily make a three-point turn and face forward as they drive off of the property.

For these reasons, we fully support and encourage the proposed garage at 164 Chestnut Street.

A stylized, cursive signature of Iris Alkalay, consisting of a large, sweeping loop followed by a horizontal line.

Iris Alkalay

A cursive signature of David Lane, written in a fluid, handwritten style.

David Lane